



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OCTOBER 1, 2008

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OCTOBER PROCLAIMED DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH *EVENTS TO HIGHLIGHT ABILITIES OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES SCHEDULED ACROSS STATE*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Governor Phil Bredesen is designating October as Disability Employment Awareness Month to generate awareness about the talents and abilities of Tennessee's citizens with disabilities.

'America's People, America's Talent...America's Strength!' is the 2008 National Disability Employment Awareness Month theme. Disability Employment Awareness Month will call attention to an untapped personnel resource in this country – persons with disabilities.

"Our citizens with disabilities can and must be important contributors to our workforce," said Bredesen. "Those businesses across Tennessee that employ persons with disabilities are leaders in not only improving community relations but also increasing productivity."

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) within the Tennessee Department of Human Services provides vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. VR services help them maximize their contribution to the workforce. Approximately 2,500 individuals with significant disabilities, including traumatic brain injury, blindness and mental retardation, were employed after completing rehabilitation programs during the last state fiscal year.

"Disability Employment Awareness Month allows us to reflect upon and consider the potential possessed by the thousands of persons with disabilities currently serving in our workforce," said DHS Commissioner Gina Lodge. "This month also reminds us of those who are ready and willing to join the workforce. We recognize and salute the skills, creativity and dedication of working people with disabilities."

Vocational rehabilitation offices across the state, as well as seventeen Tennessee Rehabilitation Centers located in rural communities and the residential comprehensive Tennessee Rehabilitation Center at Smyrna, provide numerous services to clients, including vocational training, physical or occupational therapy and transitional life skills. For more information on the centers, visit <http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/rehab/trc.htm>

DRS staff are working with businesses and agencies across Tennessee on activities recognizing Disability Employment Awareness Month. Attached is a partial list of scheduled events.

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CITIZENS PLAZA, 2nd FLOOR
400 DEADERICK STREET
NASHVILLE, TN 37243
615.313.4700

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH SCHEDULE

October 2	Disability Employment Awareness Month Community Open House The Tennessee Rehabilitation Center at Sumner County from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Contact: Larry Piper (615) 451-5826 ext. 12	Sumner County TRC 1019 Union School Rd. Gallatin, TN
October 3	Career Day for Persons with Disabilities Sponsored by the Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency, Training Resources Employment Network for Disability Services (TRENDS), and Cookeville Noon Rotary Club from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Contact: Danielle Cason (931) 520-8733 ext. 121	Hyder-Burks Agricultural Pavilion 2390 Gainesboro Grade Cookeville, TN
October 6	Business Expo and Career Day sponsored by area business and industry from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. Contact: Kim Hasty (931) 962-1162 ext. 104	Monterey Station Cowan, TN
October 7	City Signing of Proclamation for Disability Employment Awareness Month at 9 a.m. Contact: Lisa Kinkade (731) 423-5620, ext. 328	Jackson City Hall 101 East Main Street Jackson, TN
October 10	The TN Mental Health Consumers' Association Job Fair sponsored by area industry and agencies from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Contact: Lisa Kinkade (731) 423-5620 ext. 328	Madison County UT Extension Complex, 309C North Parkway Jackson, TN
October 11	Go! Fest Sponsored by the City of Chattanooga, area industry and agencies strives to eliminate barriers for persons with disabilities from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. Contact: Carol Martin (423) 634-6725.	Chattanooga Zoo at Warner Park Chattanooga, TN

October 14	Chamber of Commerce Disabilities Awareness Coffee from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Contact Elizabeth Strode (931) 685-5017	TN Rehabilitation Center at Shelbyville 1618 Railroad Avenue Shelbyville, TN
October 15	Disability Mentoring Day Contact: Regena Burrow (615) 313-4893	Statewide
October 15	Disability Employment Awareness Month Community Open House from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Contact: Pat Plumlee (615) 790-5509, ext. 114	TN Rehabilitation Center at Franklin 1405-A Brookwood Ave. Franklin, TN
October 16	"Strength through Ability" featuring the Access Express technology exhibit from the STAR Center from 9 a.m. to Noon. Contact: Harvey Buchanan (731) 668-2040	TN Career Center 362 Carriage House Dr. Jackson, TN
October 16	Area Recognition Awards Luncheon from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. by Southeast TN Placement Consortium Contact: Carol Martin (423) 634-6725	Chattanooga Convention and Trade Center One Carter Plaza Chattanooga, TN
October 17	Disability Employment Awareness Month Community Open House from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Contact: Libby Heflen (931) 380-2550	TN Rehabilitation Center of Columbia 206 Wayne Street Columbia, TN
October 21	Disability Employment Awareness Day Celebration from 1:45 p.m. to 3 p.m. Contact: Libby Heflen (931) 380-2550	TN Rehabilitation Center of Columbia 206 Wayne Street Columbia, TN
October 22	Disability Employment Awareness Month Community Open House at the TN Rehabilitation Center of Cleveland from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Contact: Delwyn Smith (423) 478-0332, ext. 27	TN Rehabilitation Center of Cleveland 3069 Overlook Drive Suite B Cleveland, TN
October 23	Social Security Benefits, Work, and You! Sponsored by local industry and agencies from 10 a.m. to Noon. Contact: Lisa Kinkade (731) 423-5620 ext. 328	TN Career Center 362 Carriage House Dr. Jackson, TN

October 23	<p>Employment Forum sponsored by Eastman Chemical Company, TN Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Employer Outreach Committee and the Northeast TN Diversity in Employment Consortium from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Contact: Teresa Smith (423) 434-6613</p>	<p>Eastman Chemical Company Toy F. Reid Employee Center 400 South Wilcox Drive Kingsport, TN</p>
October 23	<p>Mayor's Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities Recognition Awards from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Contact: Bridget Galvin (615) 862-6034</p>	<p>Metro Southeast 1417 Murfreesboro Rd. Nashville, TN</p>
October 24	<p>Disability Employment Awareness Month Community Open House at the TN Rehabilitation Center at Union City from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Contact: Chris Holbrook (731) 884-2600, ext. 108</p>	<p>TN Rehabilitation Center 1419 N. Morgan Ext. Union City, TN</p>
October 24	<p>Disability Employment Awareness Month Community Open House at the TN Rehabilitation Center at Murfreesboro at 9 a.m. Contact: Jan Bush (615) 898-8088, ext. 119</p>	<p>TN Rehabilitation Center 1132 Haley Road Murfreesboro, TN</p>
November 13	<p>TRC Disability Employment Awareness Day Contact: Gale Demick (615) 459-6811, ext. 246</p>	<p>TN Rehabilitation Center 460 Ninth Avenue Smyrna, TN</p>